

Disaster/Emergency Preparedness and Response Training for Environmental Health Professionals

Environmental Health professionals need to develop, maintain and enhance their skills and knowledge of disaster/emergency preparedness and response. To assist state and local agencies determine their training needs, the California Office of Emergency Service (OES) has developed a [matrix of required ICS, SEMS, and NIMS coursework](#)¹ for disaster workers.

Web-based and self-study courses offer one method to help accomplish training needs. These types of courses can provide a foundation that can be used for an introduction to the principles of emergency response as well as incident and program specific training. On-line courses can be especially useful for introductions to Incident Command Structure (ICS); the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS); and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). For example, the IS-700 NIMS course offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) satisfies the requirement to demonstrate NIMS competency. This course takes about two hours to complete and FEMA offers a certificate of completion.

These training courses provide the basis for emergency response operations common to all hazards. An all-hazards approach to training suggests that educational elements should be appropriate and adaptable to any type of disaster/emergency by having a consistent set of core principles. In general, these core principles are based on the concepts of ICS, SEMS, and how ICS and SEMS integrate into NIMS. We encourage environmental health professionals to look over the list of [web-based training opportunities](#)² for ICS, SEMS, and NIMS, as well as other emergency preparedness topics of interest to Environmental Health professionals. There is no charge for taking any of the courses listed.

Websites:

¹ <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/environmental/PDFs/trainingguidancefromOES.pdf>

² <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/environmental/PDFs/TrainingResourcesonWeb.pdf>